

Lillian M. Lowery, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

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November 30, 2012

The Honorable Martin O'Malley
Governor
State of Maryland
State House
100 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Joan Carter Conway, Chair
Senate Educations, Health & Environmental Affairs Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, Suite 2W
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Sheila E. Hixson, Chair
House Ways and Means Committee
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1912

RE: Maryland Advisory Council for Virtual Learning (MSAR #9088)

Dear Governor O'Malley, Senator Conway and Delegate Hixson:

The Annotated Code of Maryland § 7-10B-02, requires the establishment of a Maryland Advisory Council for Virtual Learning. The mission of this Council is to encourage and support the education of students in accordance with National Standards of Online Learning and State Law.

The attached report outlines activities conducted as of November 2012 that meet the requirements described above. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Ms. Angela L. Swainson, Instructional Technology Specialist, Instructional Technology & School Library Media Program, at 410-767-0447 or aswainson@msde.state.md.us.

Sincerely,

Lillian M. Lowery, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

Enclosure

LML/als

**Education – Maryland
Advisory Council for
Virtual Learning
MSAR 9088**

1st Annual Report to the General
Assembly

November 30

2012

The Establishment of
A Maryland Advisory Council for Virtual Learning
Annotated Education Code of Maryland § 7-10B-02

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Purpose of this Report

This is the first annual report to the General Assembly providing information on progress related to the Maryland Advisory Council for Virtual Learning as established through the Annotated Education Code of Maryland § 7-10B-02.

Activities Conducted

In an effort to ensure compliance with the law the following activities were conducted as of November 30, 2012:

I. Membership

- A. The Annotated Education Code of Maryland § 7-10B-02 defines the membership on this Council (Membership List attached).
 1. Working with the Governor's office, the members of both the Senate and the House were identified.
 2. The State Superintendent of Maryland Schools and the Director of Maryland Virtual Learning are members.
 3. The Governor's office also identified:
 - a. One representative from the Maryland Association of Boards of Education
 - b. One representative of the Maryland Parent Teacher Association
 - c. Two virtual learning providers
 - d. One representative of the business community
 - e. One teacher engaged in digital instruction
 - f. One member of the Baltimore Teachers Union
 - g. One member of the Maryland State Education Association
 - h. One Charter School advocate
 4. The Maryland State Department of Education appointed four members that are employees of local school districts that have excelled in their ability to integrate technology into the classroom.
 5. Geographic diversity and levels of education were considered throughout the process.

II. Related Documents and Activities

- A. The *Financial Disclosure Exemption* request was submitted to the State Ethics Board. It was accepted and granted on October 25, 2012.
- B. Non-State employed nominees completed and submitted the *Office of the Governor Request for Appointment Consideration Biographical Information Form*.

III. Meeting Information

- A. The first meeting was held on November 8, 2012, at the Maryland State Department of Education Building, 200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD, in Conference Room 8 from 1 PM to 3 PM.
- B. Dr. Lillian Lowery, State Superintendent of Schools, was elected as the Council Chair
- C. Meeting documentation located in Appendices:
 - 1. Agenda
 - 2. List of members
 - 3. Minutes
 - 4. Resources shared with members
 - 5. Presentation

IV. Recommendations

- A. The Council recommends dividing the actions, as stated in the Law, into the following categories:
 - 1. Finance and Policy
 - 2. Infrastructure and Training
 - 3. Curriculum and Student Services
- B. Planned action: A survey will be created and distributed before December 10, 2012, that will allow for members to prioritize their interest in serving on the recommended subcommittees.
 - 1. Once the subcommittees are formed, they may meet virtually to begin their work.
 - 2. The Maryland Department of Education committee members will identify a date and location for the second collective Council meeting.

Appendices

Maryland Advisory Council for Virtual Learning

AGENDA

November 8, 2012

1:00 PM to 3:00 PM

Maryland State Department of Education, Conference Room 8
200 West Baltimore Street,
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 1:00 – 1:20 | Welcome and Introductions – Dr. Lowery |
| 1:20 – 1:45 | Review of Senate Bill 689 and Identify the Council’s Responsibilities - Renee Spence |
| 1:45 – 2:30 | Report on Digital Learning in Maryland – Val Emrich <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Online Courses – including recovery courses<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ History○ Senate Bill 674○ Current status○ Future• MD K12 Digital Library - eReader Study• District use of tablets• District use of ePortfolios• Streaming video resources |
| 2:30 – 3:00 | Prioritize Responsibilities – Renee Spence

Determine Next Steps

Set Future Meeting Dates |
| 3:00 | Adjourn |

The parking facility is operated by Arrow Garage and is located next to the MSDE Building. Rates are \$6 for one hour, \$9 for two hours and \$14 for more than two hours.

There is additional parking located within 2 blocks of the MSDE on Fayette, Howard, Liberty and Lombard Streets.

Overview of Digital Learning in Maryland

Online Courses:

The Maryland Virtual Learning Opportunity program offers both student and professional online courses. These courses are offered directly through MSDE or are approved courses by specific vendors. Due to funding constraints, the approval of new courses has been curtailed since February 9, 2006. With the passing of Senate Bill 674, procedures have been set to allow reviewing of new courses by both MSDE and districts. Vendor reviewing fees will be used to support related activities.

June 2012 course information below:

	Number of courses
MSDE student courses	14
MSDE professional development courses	23
Vendor student online courses	62

Summer 2012 student (credit bearing) online course submittals and review status:

19 courses – Quality Matters

3 courses – Frederick County

- 7 pending release from vendor – on approval track and should be available Spring Semester
- 5 approved
- 1 withdrawn by vendor
- 4 QM awaiting revisions
- 5 denied (3 Frederick, 2 MSDE)

Two “Race to the Top” projects, Project 7 and Project 21, are dedicated to developing Common Core professional development courses and student modules.

Recovery Courses: Unless a recovery course falls under the MSDE definition of an online course, districts provide them in a blended format that includes instruction by the classroom teacher. Several districts use vendor modules or parts of courses to provide this blended environment.

Example: Over the summer Harford County provided 18 blended recovery courses for 575 students. Baltimore, Frederick, Harford, and Prince George’s Counties have also reported the use of recovery courses.

MDK12 Digital Library

The MDK12 Digital Library is a statewide purchasing consortium created to serve all 24 school districts and approximately 100 non-public schools that to date has saved the taxpayers of Maryland over \$1 million. Housed at the MSDE, the project has developed by-laws, a MOU, and a committee structure similar to the structure that has been in place since the project's inception as a Federal Title IID Grant. For the 2012-13 school year consortium members have access to negotiated pricing for digital content from over 14 major content providers including e-book content, and are all again subscribing statewide to a suite of ProQuest/SIRS databases. The consortium is in the selection/evaluation process for new content

Appendix B

to be added for the 2013-14 school year and continues to work with public and academic libraries to form a larger purchasing consortium.

eReader Study

Thirteen districts in the state of Maryland are piloting the use of mobile devices to supplement instruction, for ELL support, or as eReaders. At this point most of the devices are deployed in school libraries as eReaders. As funding allows, schools and districts continue to investigate the possible benefits of these digital tools.

Below is a list of the current devices:

Nooks, Kindles, Kindle Fires, iPads, iPod Touches, Sony, Kobos

HB 1220 (2012) - Secondary Education - Electronic Reader Pilot Program (School Libraries) – Study background research has been completed. Thirteen schools systems across Maryland are currently running or have completed eReader Pilots to date. For local school systems it is advantageous to have an eBook delivery platform that will deliver content to any eReader device (mobile, laptop, desktop, or eReader).

iPads and iPods in Instruction

Although MSDE does not ask for information related to iPads, many districts share their initiatives with us.

Examples are below:

At least seventy-eight of Anne Arundel County Public schools use iPads or iPods to supplement instruction, support ELL students, develop ePortfolios, and/or for creating and delivering student productions. Funding for the purchases has come from various sources - school, central offices, PTA/PTO. Apps have been reviewed and posted on the district's Intranet. Although the inclusion of these devices is limited in the schools, one middle school was able to equip each sixth grade student with an iPad to enhance the school's Problem Based Learning approach to learning.

Prince Georges County utilized Title 1 funding to provide iPads for each middle school. Teachers and students are creating iBooks to supplement classroom instruction. Students use the Apps and iPads on a daily basis to support learning.

Talbot County provides iPads for high school students for instruction as well as a textbook source.

St. Mary's County secured a grant to purchase iPads for instruction.

Administrative Use of iPads: In both Baltimore and Anne Arundel counties, administrators use iPads for teacher observations and productivity.

An informal report (August 2012) reflects the purchase/use of 6,056 iPads for administrative or instructional throughout Maryland.

ePortfolios

Various counties have explored the use of Microsoft 365 and ThreeRing for student ePortfolios. ThreeRing provides an interface between mobile devices and computers.

Appendix B

Streaming Video and Multimedia Assets

Four districts and nine individual schools have purchased Safari Montage's digital streaming product.
17 districts have adopted Discovery Education centrally or in individual schools

Senate Bill 689

Maryland Advisory Council for Virtual Learning

Mission & Members

Mission:

The mission of the Council is to encourage and support the education of students in accordance with National Standards of Online Learning and State Law.

Members:

The Council consists of the following members:

Name	Affiliation
Dr. Lillian M. Lowery	State Superintendent of Schools
Val Emrich	Maryland Virtual Learning Opportunities Office
Senator James Rosapepe	Senate of Maryland
Senator Christopher Shank	Senate of Maryland
Honorable Andrew Serafini	House of Delegates
Honorable Aruna Miller	House of Delegates
Dr. Clayton Wilcox	Public Schools Superintendent Association of Maryland (PSSAM)
Cathy Allen	Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE)
Terri-Ann Chiu	Maryland Parent Teacher Association
Kaye Howe	National STEM Digital Library (NSDL)
Peter Haydock	Smithsonian Institute
Justin Hartings	Representative of Business Community
Joshua Dorsey	Teacher (engaged in Digital Instruction)
Kenya Campbell	Baltimore Teachers Union
Anna Gannon	Maryland State Education Association
Kimberly Worthington	Charter School Advocate
Robert Cole, Howard County	LSS Representative (appointed by Department)

Appendix C

Erin Senior, Anne Arundel County	LSS Representative (appointed by Department)
Matthew Winner, Howard County	LSS Representative (appointed by Department)
Joquetta Johnson, Baltimore County	LSS Representative (appointed by Department)
TBD	LSS Representative (appointed by Department)
TBD	LSS Representative (appointed by Department)
TBD	Parent (student must participate in Digital Learning Opportunities')

Minutes: Maryland Advisory Council for Virtual Learning – MSDE, CR#8 - 8 November 2012

Members in Attendance: Dr. Lillian Lowery, Valerie Emrich, Cathy Allen, Kenya Campbell, Terri-Ann Chiu, Robert Cole, Joshua Dorsey, Anna Gannon, Justin Hartings, Peter Haydock, Kay Howe, Joquetta Johnson, Erin Senior, Honorable Andrew Serafini, Senator Christopher Shank, Matthew Winner, Kimberly Worthington.

Additional Attendees: Jay Bansbach, Kenneth Battle, Matthew Frailing, Matthew Greenwood, Gary Smith, Dennis Rasmussen.

Meeting Notes:

Welcome and Introductions (Dr. Lowery) – bipartisan support from people from across the state – one of the first conversations with the governor around “digital” learning – best thinking from around the state – every level from around the state PK-20+ and early learning –

Review of Senate Bill 689 and Identify the Council’s Responsibilities (Renee Spence) – (HB745) – Chapters 290/291 – establishment of the council, welcomed staffing of this council on behalf of the Governor, with so many priorities hard to get virtual learning moving forward, making some recommendations – amended themselves onto the council, important work

Rules for the council, cannot be compensated but can be reimbursed for mileage, etc. Will make recommendations to the State Superintendent and to the General Assembly – (reference bill pg. 5) – list – will prioritize later which council will address first – last item “what other tasks may be needed” – report due by December 1, 2013 – Speakers of both Houses, House Ways and Means and Senate Health, Education – motion regarding the “Chair” of the committee (Sen. Shank)

Sen. Shank – become number 1 in virtual learning, how can we encourage, does the state need to get out of the way – look at examples that can work, can invent from the ground up – bi-partisan issue – bill does specify – does elevate with Dr. Lowery chairing

Motion: Sen. Shank nominated Dr. Lowery, Sen. Serafini (seconded) – all in favor

Sen. Serafini – example from New Castle school district – student completed while in Africa – economic viability for students, in favor of blended learning – new reality of students today – partnership with MSDE – number one in virtual learning

Report on Digital Learning in Maryland (Val Emrich) – ppt slides – not been able to review and approve courses, Bob Cole – COMAR legislation funded by Title II D – roles in school systems, subsidizing enrollments, no operating budget at MSDE – supporting digital initiatives with no additional funds – no data available for 2010-11 due to push back to local school districts, MSDE also contracting with local

Appendix D

school systems (end of federal funding), all call to points of contact – recommendations (Dr. Lowery): have break down by district –

Val: Courses submitted to date -- ppt – explanation of UDL and Accessibility (Dr. Lowery) -- question: Sen. Serafini – repeating the work of other states – no: QM started with College

Q: Sup. Wilcox – Florida virtual courses accepted – we or locals would review – credit bearing – if developed locally is same process (K-8 can move on – not credit bearing) -

Process the same (Justin Hastings) – for locally created courses

What is statute? SB674

Bob Cole – did advocate for decentralizing the process while here at MSDE, example: Algebra Data Analysis –

Q: with Common Core Standards will approval become faster? Should but not necessarily – may also vary by district about what is allowed – local policy also barrier to access

Renee – Sen. Rosapepe – reason for SB674 – how can we get more courses approved – legislation allows both avenues – locals review and recommend and final vetting at MSDE

How is data being collected in regard to student success? (Kaye Howe) – hopefully don't look just at grades

Sen. Serafini – financial course example (financial literacy) – Virginia course – need people to become lifelong learners –

Dr. Lowery to Bob Cole – how is there a way to expedite – recommendations: administrative support also an issue – all states that lead the effort and it has come from the Governor, etc. Florida (FTEs) funded at the state level – specific funding stream – getting bureaucracy out of the way – get outside entities to run as an agency

Val: Big concern – unions see jobs going away to virtual schools – Erin Senior (AACo) teaching across district lines – grown immensely – can no longer find funding – growing our own teachers and teachers don't feel threatened – lot of money to send students to schools

(Cathy Allen) America's Promise – implement a program in St. Mary's Co. – can take before, during, or after school or through another site – 2 classrooms dedicated – 20% of students interfaced with the program – jump of 5% - will be replacing summer school in some cases and evening high school classes – accepted through MSDE and buying through the vendor – what is we are advocating for – blended learning -- teacher in the room – does not go through the review process – 80/20%

CIOs – St. Mary's 2.5 mil. through military granting authority – 410 classrooms in St. Mary's County

ePortfolios – pilot in AACo using Three Ring – can capture especially in non-tested areas, music education, art, etc.

Appendix D

Joquetta – Baltimore County students awarded with their own domain

Streaming video resources – Safari Montage, Discovery Education – can be used in instruction – using in the context of creating their own digital textbooks

Professional development – underlying everything – for our teachers, use our EdTech funding – funding no longer available – needs to be up front before the technology – administrators must be part of that –

Joquetta – must also be accountable for what you are learning –

Wilcox – we are 12 years into the 21st century – how do we create the conditions that every student will take an online course in the next 5 years – homeschoolers (500) in Washington Co. – they don't need that – cart and horse mixed up – discuss virtual courses, then we embrace pd for the folks that need to teach virtually in a blended --

Gradual virtual learning experience – from elementary school and up (Terry Chiu) – scaffolding for all teachers – question

(Anna Gannon) As educators – needs to be a number of hours of exposure for anything to come to fruition and be adopted as a permanent experience – strong learning community in Howard Co – technology changes so rapidly – need to grow our own educators, supports in place

Kaye Howe – pressures of learning communities – granularity – people doing things so well – save a lot of time and effort and find what we need from other places – use professional resources that are out there --

Josh Dorsey – steep learning curve for teachers, those need to take risks, school culture – high enrollment at some schools and none at others – change in school culture – AP Calculus course as example

Fear – loss of jobs, prioritize pd (Erin Senor) – offer online pd –

How do we remove roadblocks and enhance virtual learning?? Professional development then will come along.

Prioritize Responsibilities (Renee Spence) –

Bob Cole - through the lens – all these are components of virtual learning, going to be bold in what we are looking to do – systemic changes

Sen. Shank – subcommittees and work virtually (smaller groups)

Sen. Serfini – example integration of virtual learning as part of the educational process – bold thinking, has to be systemically – should be “efficiencies” – no option to opt out (local counties)

Dr. Wilcox - Recommendation: - group Require every student in the state of MD that every student has to have completed a credit bearing course

Appendix D

Dr. Wilcox -Recommendation: Group to look at teaching and learning and what will that compensation and curriculum look like –

Sen. Shank – thoughts around these three areas – send in and share with each other (Sup. Wilcox – add students to advisory) – self-identify with a subcommittee through e-mail – subcommittees meet online, set chairs – subcommittees can ask for presentations

- Finance and policy -
- Curriculum and student services
- Technology infrastructure and training

Expectations – what are they? Inclusion of media literacy (St. Mary's) – 21st century skills –

Justin Hartings – how do we blow away the current model – what is the solution for technology – hope we can find a process and way to facilitate MSDE, maintain standards –

Determine Next Steps --

Goals – for each subcommittee

Set Future Meeting Dates

Need employers – as part of group – people are becoming generalists and being employed in smaller sector

Resources

"Digital Learning Now." . Foundation for Excellence in Education, 1 2010. Web. 6 Nov 2012.
<<http://www.excelined.org/Docs/Digital Learning Now Report FINAL.pdf>>.

Born in Another Time: Ensuring Educational Technology Meets the Needs of Students Today-and Tomorrow. National Association of State Boards of Education, n.d. Web. 6 Nov 2012.
<assess4ed.net/system/files/resources/nasbe_technology_r...>



AGENDA

- Welcome and Introductions
 - Dr. Lowery
- Review of Senate Bill 689
 - Renee Spence
- Identify Council's Responsibilities
 - Renee Spence
- Report on Digital Learning in Maryland
 - Val Emrich
- Wrap-up

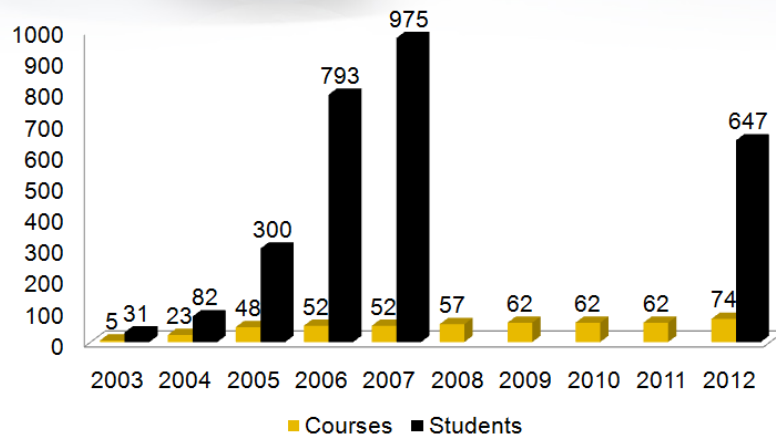
Digital Learning - Maryland

Student Online Courses

- History
- Senate Bill 674
- Current Status
- Voices
- Future



Student Online Courses





Online Courses

Status of Courses submitted this summer:

19 courses – Quality Matters
3 courses – Frederick County

- 7 pending release from vendor –
on approval track and should be available Spring Semester
- 5 approved
- 1 withdrawn by vendor
- 4 QM awaiting revisions
- 5 denied (3 Frederick, 2 MSDE)

Issues:

Accessibility and Universal Design for Learning
Measurable Outcomes
Alignment of Standards
Demo courses



Voices





Digital Learning - Maryland

MD K12 Digital Library

- eReader Study

District use of tablets

- 6,056 iPads

District use of ePortfolios

- ThreeRing, Sky Drive

Streaming video resources

- Safari Montage, Discovery Education



Prioritizing

Funding strategies – quality options in course providers and delivery
High Quality PD for teachers and principals – digital and/or instruction
Student assessment and accountability
Infrastructure necessary to support digital learning
Align resources and digital learning initiatives of all State agencies
Mobile learning and mobile learning applications
Coordination of digital learning programs
Increase opportunities for at-risk, home bound, special needs and alt ed
Planning for changes in technology and digital learning
Implementation plan for providing digital learning opportunities for all
Expand curriculum for mathematics, science, foreign language and AP



Next Steps

- Additional stakeholders
 - Principal, CIO, STEM, Assessment, MVS???
- Future meeting dates

Val Emrich
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